

December

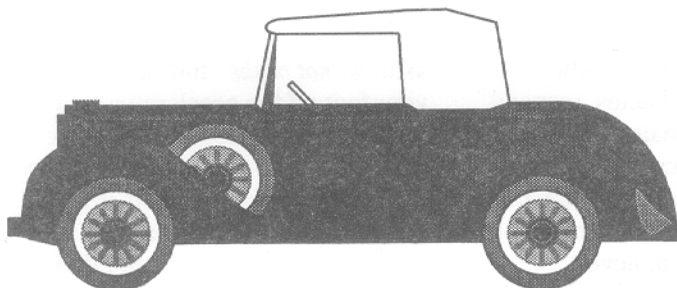
National Drunk & Drugged Driving
Awareness Week

Safe Manual Handling of Material & Equipment

Building Custodian Responsibilities for
Snow & Ice Removal

Christmas & New Year's Eve Holiday Safety

DEFENSIVE DRIVING



The world's first motor vehicle death probably occurred in London, England, on August 17, 1896. The first motor vehicle death in the United States reportedly occurred in New York City on September 13, 1899. By the

end of 1993, nearly 2,950,000 people died in motor vehicle accidents in the United States. Based on historical figures, the 1,000,000th motor-vehicle death occurred in 1952, and the 2,000,000th occurred in 1974, while the 3,000,000th death occurred in the Spring of 1994.

According to recent data from seven state traffic authorities, about 88 percent of the drivers involved in fatal accidents were residents of the state in which the accident occurred; 73 percent of them were local residents and 15 percent resided elsewhere in the state.

Driving irresponsibly is a life threatening risk. Improper driving practices contribute to fatal accidents. Exceeding the posted speed limit or driving at an unsafe speed is the most common error in rural accidents. Right of way violations are predominate in urban injury accidents. Practices such as driving left of the center of the road, improper passing, improper turns, and following too closely constitute 57.7 percent of all fatal accidents and 74.3 percent of personal injury accidents.

The odds of risk taking while driving are quite simple -- 50-50. You will either escape injury or you will not. The outcome of taking the risk and losing could be fatal. Drive responsibly for the sake of you and your passengers, and others who share the roadways with you.

By: Susie Ashby
Safety and Occupational
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Installation Safety Division

TIPS FOR PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS

Working Safely When You Drive

Every time you step into a vehicle, you face a potential driving hazard. Professional drivers, who spend the majority of their workday behind the wheel, are at an even greater risk. Take a few minutes to review these basic tips for working safely when you drive. Be a safe driver, not a statistic.

Your Vehicle Is Your Tool

All workers use tools, from office equipment to industrial machinery. Your tool is your vehicle. Treat your vehicle like you would any tool—use it with respect and keep it in good condition. Check your vehicle frequently—at least once a week—to be sure that brakes, accelerator, belts, radiator, oil, battery, tires, head lamps, wipers, and brake lights are all in good working condition. If you notice *anything* abnormal in the way your vehicle sounds or operates, have it repaired by a qualified mechanic immediately.

Drive Defensively

You can't assume that everyone on the road is as good a driver as you


are. Steer clear of drivers who swerve in and out of lanes, respond slowly to traffic signals, or appear to be driving erratically. Pay special attention at intersections. Wait before accelerating when a red light turns green, never accelerate through a yellow signal, and always yield the right of way. Pass only in designated passing zones, and only after you've checked blind spots for clearance. Use the four-second rule for establishing safe following distance. (When the vehicle in front of you passes a fixed object—like a signpost—begin counting "one Mississippi, two Mississippi," etc. until your vehicle reaches the same object.) If you can't count to four before passing the same object, you're driving too close.

Tune Into The Weather

Before you begin any trip, check for weather conditions along your route. If roads are slick from rain, ice, or poor surfaces, reduce your speed and proceed cautiously. Use low-gear on steep grades or slippery surfaces. If you should

skid, *do not brake*. Instead, take your foot off the accelerator, and turn in the direction you want the front wheels to go. In dense fog or heavy rain, where visibility is bad, pull to the side of the road, if possible, and wait until conditions improve. (Keep your emergency flashers on so that oncoming drivers can see you.) When you start to drive again, use low-beams until fog clears.

Stay Alert

The best defense you have against potential accidents is your own ability to remain alert and aware while driving. That's why alcohol, drugs, or other medications can be lethal when you drive. They affect your ability to concentrate and impair your reaction time which can lead to injury, disability, and all too often, death—not only of the driver, but of innocent victims as well. If you're angry, distracted, or tired, don't get behind the wheel—you'll be less able to react to potentially dangerous situations. Be alert, be aware, and be safe—that's the professional way to drive. 



Use the four-second rule for establishing safe following distance.



Alcohol, drugs, or other medications can impair your driving skills.

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DRIVER'S FATIGUE

Imagine a long hard week has finally come to an end. The final suspense of the week is met and the weekend is here. You quickly change into your favorite comfortable driving clothes and exchange your highly disciplined work schedule for an unencumbered freedom. You get into your car and head out for home -- several hundred miles away. No problem. And it wasn't...until you fell asleep behind the wheel sometime later at 70 mph.

Your spouses' face is perfectly still as the tears run silently down, dripping on the sleeve of your favorite jacket.

Your son stands in your driveway, basketball in hand, looking up at the hoop you installed together just last weekend. But he can't bring himself to throw the ball.

Upstairs, your daughter tries to get ready for school. She strokes the family dog that waits patiently by the stairs and listens for the familiar footsteps he will never hear again.

Not far away, your parents cling to the last gift you gave them, as if holding onto it would bring you back.

At the office, your co-workers quietly exit from your boss's office. One takes the folders from the "in" box on your desk while another starts gathering the photos and keepsakes from your bulletin board.

It didn't have to happen. And if you let yourself imagine the unimaginable for a few minutes, perhaps it never will.

Time and again, a trip home or a weekend vacation ends in tragedy. Fatigue is a major accident cause, and it is deadly. Fatigue can be prevented. In fact, fatigue is easier to prevent than to cure.

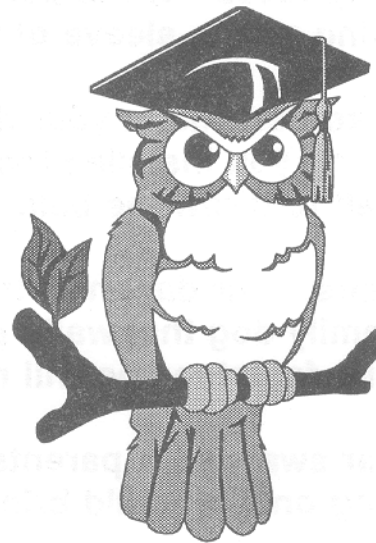
Research shows a marked decreased in mental alertness after 2 hours, even for fully rested drivers. Safety experts recommend a 10-minute break after every 2 hours of driving. When lack of rest is the cause of fatigue, the only cure is sleep. Further high risk behavior is elevated when you rely on outdated and dangerous methods such as drinking coffee, singing, and opening the car windows.

When you become sleepy behind the wheel of a motor vehicle, you become more than just a threat to your own safety; you threaten those around you as well. Other drivers who share the roadways with you become innocent victims, as do your family and friends.

The bottom line is, the only recommended control for fatigue is to

STOP

By: Susie Ashby
Installation Safety Division



Lesson Plan

Subject: Drinking sensibly

Scheduled time: 20 minutes

Instructor: First Line Supervisor

Audience: Military and Civilian Personnel

Objective. To increase awareness of the steps that can be taken to promote sensible drinking.

1. It may surprise you that most problem drinkers are not alcoholics. They're people pretty much like you—in the beginning. But their drinking changes them. Two out of every three American adults drink alcoholic beverages at least sometimes. One out of ten of them becomes an alcoholic. Many more of them become problem drinkers. Think it can't happen to you? Don't be so sure. Remember, no one starts out to become a problem drinker. But a great many people end up that way. If you drink, you should learn to drink sensibly, to drink without getting drunk. Drinking is socially acceptable; drunkenness is not.

2. What's wrong with getting drunk? Look closely at the possibilities. At the very least, drunkenness can cause you embarrassment or a hangover. At the most, it can create tragic situations; a drunk driving accident, the breakup of a marriage and a family, a soldier being kicked out of the Army because of alcohol abuse. Drinking sensibly and knowing what to watch out for can help keep you from abusing alcohol.

3. How much is too much? "Drinking too much" is defined not only by the amount of alcohol you swallow, but by how you act when you're drinking. For some people, a couple of drinks may be too much. What it all comes down to is that if your drinking is causing any problems in your life, then you are "drinking too much."

4. The same amount of alcohol can affect different people in different ways. Even the same person can react differently to the same amount of alcohol under different circumstances. Here are some factors that determine how alcohol will affect you.

- How fast you drink. If you sip a drink and don't have more than one drink per hour, the alcohol won't have a chance to build up in your blood.

- How much you weigh. The same amount of alcohol has a greater effect on a lighter person than it does on a heavier person. If you lose weight, you need to adjust your drinking to fit the new you.

- Whether or not you have eaten. Eating, especially high-protein foods like cheese and meat, will slow down the absorption rate.

- Your mood, attitude, and drinking experience. All these have a great effect on how your body will handle alcohol. If you are tired, upset, or in an unusually good mood, alcohol will have a stronger impact than usual.

5. How can you be a sensible drinker? If you drink alcohol in a sensible manner, chances are that you will never have a drinking problem. Here are some ways to avoid overdrinking.

- Keep in mind that drinking should not be the primary focus of any activity. And getting drunk

should never be the goal of any drinking.

- Remember that your right to drink is governed by laws. Obey those laws: don't drink and drive, and don't drink until you're legally of age to do so.
- Set a limit on how many drinks you are going to have when you drink, and stick to it. Uncontrolled drinking can lead to uncontrollable drinking.
- Know how strong your drinks are, and base your drinking decisions on the amount of alcohol in each drink. You can't know *how much* you're drinking unless you know *what* you're drinking.
- Never be afraid to say "No" to a drink. If you say it confidently, calmly but firmly, people will accept it. If you hesitate, you pave the way for others to tease or argue you into a drink you neither want nor need.
- Never drink because you feel you "need" a drink. Doing so can lead to a dependence on alcohol.
- Eat a good meal before you drink. It will slow the absorption of alcohol into your blood.
- Drink slowly. Intoxication occurs when alcohol is taken in faster than the body can dispose of it. Space your drinks over time (no more than one per hour) so your body can handle the alcohol.
- Don't drink and drive. Ever.
- Get help if you think that your drinking is getting out of hand. The earlier you detect a problem, the easier it is to take care of.

Conclusion. Drinking can be enjoyable and safe if one abides by a few commonsense rules and always obeys drinking laws.

Questions and answers. ■

Lesson plan

Subject: Legal Consequences of Drinking and Driving

Scheduled time: 10 minutes

Instructor: First Line Supervisor

Audience: Military and Civilian personnel

Objective: To increase awareness of the penalties of drinking and driving.

1. Most states consider a person to be legally intoxicated with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 to .10. However, a person can now be charged with driving while impaired or driving under the influence at a BAC level well below the intoxicated level. Most states now consider a motor vehicle operator to be impaired or under the influence with a BAC between .03 and .05. This means a driver can be charged with a DUI with just one drink in the bloodstream, and the legal consequences for intoxicated or impaired are generally the same.
2. Most states apply the principle of "Implied Consent." If a law enforcement officer requests that you submit to either a blood alcohol or a breathalyzer test and you refuse, you can be charged with driving while intoxicated, and your drivers license will automatically be suspended or revoked.
3. What happens after you have been arrested and charged with DUI? After failing the breathalyzer test, you may be jailed in a holding cell for several hours. This allows you time to sober up. Later, at your preliminary hearing, a judge will decide if the police officer had enough evidence to arrest you. When probable cause is determined, the judge will set a date for you to be tried. Once convicted of DUI you can be fined, go to jail, or both. In addition, you will probably have your drivers license suspended for at least 6 months or revoked.
4. In addition to civil penalties, you can expect your insurance premiums to go up, if your carrier doesn't cancel your insurance altogether. Does your job require you to drive an Army Motor Vehicle? You can also expect your local commander to impose a penalty under UCMJ. This could range from an Article 15 to a general court martial, depending on the severity of the case.

Conclusion. Drinking and driving is serious business. Think of the consequences and then ask yourself if it's worth it. Only you can answer that question.

Questions and answers. ■

Lesson Plan

Subject: Recognizing and Avoiding Impaired Drivers

Scheduled time: 10 minutes

Instructor: First Line Supervisor

Audience: Military and Civilian Personnel

Objective: To increase the student's ability to recognize and avoid the impaired driver.

1. Contrary to popular belief, most drunk drivers do not go speeding recklessly down the street. This does not mean that they cannot be identified by other drivers on the road. Most intoxicated drivers know they are intoxicated and want to avoid being caught. As a result, the intoxicated driver could be going extremely slowly and being extra cautious. Most intoxicated drivers think they are driving properly; they do not realize they are going 20 mph below the posted speed or that they are weaving all over the road. This doesn't mean that all drivers going slow are intoxicated; it is, however, the first indicator.
2. Other clues to a driver's condition are his or her reaction to traffic conditions. Intoxicated drivers will be slow to react to a changing traffic signal or a stop sign. They may go wide in turns, or they may just be staring out the windshield.
3. Once you have identified an impaired driver, what do you do? The main thing is to avoid him or her. If the impaired driver is ahead of you, reduce your speed and try to anticipate the driver's next move. Do not attempt to pass. By remaining behind the impaired driver, you are able to watch and adjust as necessary. If the impaired driver is behind you, it is best to pull into the first available parking lot and let the driver pass you. If the impaired driver is approaching you, either pull off the right side of the road as far as possible or, as mentioned above, pull into a parking lot out of the driver's way.
4. If time permits and a telephone is available, notify the police with a description of the vehicle, its last known location, and direction of travel. If you can do it safely, get the vehicle license number and relay it also.

Conclusion. Not all impaired drivers are easy to identify. They can be even harder to avoid. Remember, impaired drivers can do irrational things and do. Avoid them if at all possible. Remember also to leave yourself an out.

Questions and answers. ■

Lesson Plan

Subject: Recognizing Common Signs of Drunk Driving

Scheduled time: 10 minutes

Instructor: First Line Supervisor

Audience: Military and Civilian Personnel

Objective. To instruct the student on common signs of drunk drivers.

1. There are common signs of drinking too much that can serve as a warning not to put yourself behind the wheel of an automobile. The same signs can also help you stay away from others who are drinking and driving. The signs show up in every driving task.

2. Here are some of the clues to impaired driving ability:

Driving task	Signs
Controlling speed	Too fast or too slow Changing from fast to slow Slow driving in the left lane
Making turns	Running over the curb Going into the wrong lane
Keeping position	Weaving Straddling lines Driving over the center line
Obedying controls	Crossing on a yellow light Stopping for a green light
Starting up	Quick or jerky starts
Stopping	Stopping short of a stop sign Overshooting a stop sign Running stop signs Stopping on the road
Signaling	No signal Wrong signal
Using lights	No lights Failure to dim lights.

3. The drinking driver also makes some other serious mistakes that are frequently the cause of alcohol-related crashes. These mistakes include improper passing, backing up on the highway, and going the wrong way. Other clues to a drinking driver are:

- Open windows in bad weather.
- Driver slumping in the seat.
- Head out of the window.
- Objects being thrown from the car.

Conclusion. Drinking affects driving skills—and not for the better.

Questions and answers. ■

Lesson Plan

Subject: Recognizing Personality Changes in the Impaired Individual

Scheduled time: 10 minutes

Instructor: First Line Supervisor

Audience: Military and Civilian Personnel

Objective. To increase student's awareness of how alcohol affects personality.

While alcohol affects people differently, several danger signs warn of an impaired driver. They appear in the following order.

—Inhibitions

- Being overly friendly
- Blustering, swaggering, and bragging
- Becoming loud
- Changing from loud to quiet or vice versa
- Drinking alone
- Annoying others

—Judgment

- Complaining about strength of drink
- Changing consumption rate
- Ordering doubles
- Arguing
- Using foul language
- Throwing money around carelessly
- Buying rounds for strangers or buying for house
- Making irrational statements
- Becoming belligerent

—Reactions

- Lighting more than one cigarette at a time
- Unable to light cigarette
- Eyes becoming glassy; lacking focus
- Losing train of thought
- Slurring speech

—Coordination

- Unable to pick up change
- Spilling drink; can't find mouth with glass
- Unable to sit straight on chair or bar stool, swaying, drowsy
- Stumbling; has trouble moving around objects in path; bumps into things
- Falling

Conclusion. Drinking affects personality, temperament, and coordination too seriously for one to attempt something as important as driving an automobile.

Questions and answers. ■

Lesson Plan

Subject: Signs of a drinking problem

Scheduled time: 10 minutes

Instructor: First Line Supervisor

Audience: Military and Civilian Personnel

Objective. To increase awareness of the signs that can signal the progression from "social" drinking to a drinking problem.

1. A drinking problem usually develops over time. There are almost always warning signals along the way. Knowing what to look for can help you avoid becoming a problem drinker. Ask yourself these questions.

- Are you drinking more or more often than you used to? Do you often drink until you're drunk?
- Do you find that it now takes several drinks to get the effects that a couple used to?
- Do you ever drink in the morning or at work?
- Do you sometimes forget what you said or did or how you got home after drinking?
- Do you ever take an extra drink and hope that no one notices? Do you ever lie about how much you are drinking?
- Do you do or say things while you're drinking that you wouldn't do or say otherwise?
- Do you find yourself planning, scheming, and wishing for more drinking occasions? Are you uneasy in situations where you can't have a drink?
- Does your drinking make you feel guilty or embarrassed to the point that you avoid talking about it?

2. A "yes" answer to any of these questions is a warning that you may be well on your way to a serious drinking problem. For help and support, call your local Alcohol and Drug Community Counseling Center or Army Community Services Office. Don't take any chances; get help now—the sooner, the better. There's no shame in asking for help with a drinking problem. It's a shame not to when help is so readily available.

Conclusion. You don't have to be an alcoholic to be a problem drinker, and you don't have to be an alcoholic to get help with a drinking problem.

Questions and answers. ■

Drunk Driving Accident Prevention Ideas

The following is a listing of good ideas that may assist in unit drunk driving prevention programs.

- A new twist on the designated driver idea—use the buddy system for planned festivities. The designated driver signs a "Friends don't let friends drive drunk" card and his buddy signs a "no hassle" pledge to give up his car keys when his buddy says he's had too much.

- Require unit soldiers going on leave to sign no-drunk-driving contracts. They promise that they'll make alternative transportation arrangements before attending a function where alcohol will be served.

- Distribute red ribbons to all soldiers and have them tie the ribbons on their car keys. This serves as a reminder not to drink and drive.

- Hold a contest for the "most fun" or "most entertaining" non-alcoholic unit holiday festivities to de-glamorize alcohol and promote the idea that real soldiers don't have to drink to have fun.

- Provide breathalyzer tests on-site with no

UCMJ action as an educational and awareness tool to prevent accidents.

- Demonstrate leader concern for off-duty safety by having officers and NCOs visit community hot spots—places known to be frequented by their soldiers.

- Conduct a mock memorial service before the holiday leave period emphasizing that festivities should be memorable, NOT memorial.

- Have soldiers sign and carry pledge cards promising to call unit leaders when they have had too much to drink. Some leaders attach quarters to these cards for the phone calls.

- With assistance from Alcohol and Drug personnel, train supervisors to spot the early warning signs of potential drug/alcohol abusers.

- Coordinate with club managers to serve "designated drivers" free non-alcoholic beverages all evening. Designated driver buttons should be distributed as drivers come through the door.

- Initiate a trip plan review for soldiers planning holiday travel. ■

Drink Chart
Number of Drinks in One Hour
Approximate Blood Alcohol Content (BAC)

DRINKS		Body Weight by Pounds								STATUS
		100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240	
One Drink- 1 oz. of 100 proof liquor, or 12 oz. beer, or 4 oz. fortified table wine.	1	.04	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	RISKY
	2	.08	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.03	.03	
	3	.11	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	.05	.05	IMPAIRED
	4	.15	.12	.11	.09	.08	.08	.07	.06	
	5	.19	.16	.13	.12	.11	.09	.09	.08	
	6	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09	
	7	.26	.22	.19	.16	.15	.13	.12	.11	ILLEGAL
	8	.30	.25	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.13	
	9	.34	.28	.24	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	
	10	.38	.31	.27	.23	.21	.19	.17	.16	

Alcohol leaves the body at approximately 3/4 oz. per hour. The illegal BAC in most states is 0.10.

Lesson Plan

Subject: Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)

Scheduled time: 10 minutes

Instructor: First Line Supervisor

Audience: Military and Civilian Personnel

Objective. To increase awareness of the impairment caused by blood alcohol concentration.

1. Blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is a percentage of the amount of alcohol in a person's bloodstream. A large person usually can consume more alcoholic beverages than a small person but have a lower BAC. For example, if both had two drinks, the larger person may not feel the effects as much as the smaller. The smaller person has less blood in the body; therefore, the concentration will be higher.
2. For an average 150-pound person, the rate of alcohol absorption is constant. A person's BAC will rise .02 to .025 with each drink. In most states, a person is legally impaired after just two drinks and is legally intoxicated after four. Once a person's BAC begins to rise, the only way to reduce it is to wait it out. It takes time for the liver to oxidize the alcohol out of the bloodstream. Coffee or a cold shower will have no effect on sobriety.
3. There are several ways to limit one's BAC. The best way is to limit the amount of alcohol consumed. Another is to keep track of how much you drink in any given time period so you never allow your BAC to rise into the danger zone.

Conclusion. BAC and driver impairment begin with the first drink and require time to lower. A person's BAC can be well below the intoxicated level and still cause impairment.

Questions and answers. ■

Lesson Plan

Subject: Physical and Mental Factors Impaired by Alcohol

Scheduled time: 10 minutes

Instructor: First Line Supervisor

Audience: Military and Civilian Personnel

Objective. To increase awareness of the impairment caused by alcohol consumption.

1. While many people feel stimulated when drinking, the fact is, alcohol is a depressant. It acts as a sedative on the brain. Even a small amount of alcohol causes depression of those parts of the brain that are in charge of judgment, self-control, and inhibition. Lack of inhibition causes the euphoria familiar to a lot of drinkers. The greater the consumption of alcohol, the greater the depression on the part of the brain that controls coordination and physical reflexes. Driving skills such as visual sharpness, reaction time, and general awareness of situations around the driver are hindered by alcohol.

2. Different people are affected by alcohol in different ways. A heavy drinker may show no outward signs of being intoxicated while a light drinker may show the physical effects almost immediately. Regardless of the physical effects shown or the perception of intoxication, the resulting impairment of the brain is identical.

3. While body chemistry and physiology differ among individuals, the effects of alcohol wear off at a constant rate—depending on the individual, roughly one drink per hour. As a general rule of thumb, before driving, an individual should wait at least one hour for each drink consumed. Once a person's BAC begins to rise, time is the only way to reduce it. Medical experts warn that the aftereffects of alcohol consumption are still clearly evident long after the BAC reaches zero. Studies show that driving performance can remain degraded by up to 20 percent for several hours after the last detectable amount of alcohol has left the body. So the best advice on drinking and driving is—*don't*.

Conclusion. Despite misperceptions and myths, alcohol's effects on the human brain are identical regardless of body size. Any alcohol consumption can and will affect a person's ability to operate an automobile. Moral: Don't drink and drive regardless of how you feel alcohol affects you.

Questions and answers. ■

Reconstruction of a crash

This is the slow-motion, split second reconstruction of what happens when an unbelted driver crashes into a solid, immovable tree at 55 mph.

One-tenth of a second. The front bumper and chrome "frosting" of the grillwork collapse. Slivers of steel penetrate the tree to a depth of 1½ inches or more.

Two-tenths of a second. The hood crumbles as it rises, smashing into the windshield. Spinning rear wheels leave the ground. The front fenders come into contact with the tree, forc-

ing the rear parts out over the front door. The heavy structural members of the car begin to act as a brake on the terrific forward momentum of the 2½-ton car. But the driver's body continues to move forward at the vehicle's original speed—20 times the normal force of gravity; his body weighs approximately 3,200 pounds. His legs, ramrod straight, snap at the knee joints.

Three-tenths of a second. The driver's body is now off the seat, torso upright, broken knees pressing against the dashboard. The plastic and steel frame of the steering wheel begins to bend under his terrible death grip. His head is now near the sun visor, his chest above the steering column.

Four-tenths of a second. The car's front 24 inches have been demolished, but the rear end is still traveling at an estimated speed of 35 mph. The body of the driver is still traveling 55 mph. The rear end of the car, like a bucking horse, rises high enough to scrape bark off low branches.

Five-tenths of a second. The driver's near-frozen hands bend the steering column into an almost vertical position. The force of gravity crushes his chest against the steering wheel, rupturing arteries. Blood spurts into his lungs.

Six-tenths of a second. The driver's feet are ripped from his shoes. The brake pedal shears off at the floor boards. The chassis bends in the middle, shearing body bolts. The driver's head smashes into the windshield. The rear of the car begins its downward fall, spinning wheels digging into the ground.

Seven-tenths of a second. The entire writhing body of the car is forced out of shape. Hinges tear, doors spring open. In one last convulsion, the seat rams forward, pinning the driver against the cruel steel of the steering shaft. Blood leaps from his mouth; shock has frozen his heart. The driver is now dead.

Elapsed time: only seven-tenths of a second.

At least it's not a long time to suffer.

DUI is risky business

The three biggest risks of driving under the influence are—

Risk of an accident. You already know that your safety and the safety of others is at stake if you drink and drive. By .04 percent BAC, you have increased the driving risk. By .10 percent BAC, legally DUI in all states, your chances of an accident are at least six times greater than when sober.

Risk of an arrest. Police officers realize the seriousness of drinking and driving and enforce-

ment has changed greatly. Considerable effort is being made to keep drunk drivers off the road. Arrests for DUI have doubled during the past five years. The drinking driver is being treated as a major highway safety problem.

Risk of inconvenience. Driving a car makes things convenient. If you lose your license due to DUI, activities that were possible may be out of your reach. In some cases, having a driver's license is a necessity for employment. Losing your license may result in losing your livelihood. ■

Alcohol and behavior

When alcohol reaches the brain it affects the way people behave. The effects are present with one drink. When the drinker has trouble talking or walking, it is not because the muscles controlling speech and movement are impaired, but because the control center—the brain—is affected. The first area of the brain affected controls social inhibitions and other things that we learn. Eventually, alcohol affects all behaviors and body processes.

Here's how the amount of alcohol consumed in one hour will affect the average 160- to 180-pound person:

One beer (BAC .01-.02 percent). Inhibitions are lessened; judgment begins to be affected.

Two beers (BAC .03-.04 percent). Reaction time is slower; drinker appears relaxed

and friendly.

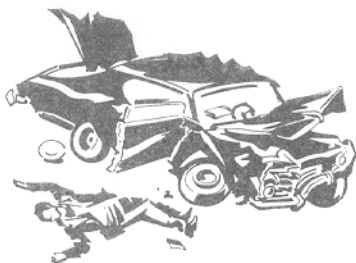
Three beers (BAC .05-.06 percent). Judgment is not sound; reasoning less reliable. Drinker will not be thinking clearly and may do or say things that are rude and unreasonable.

Four beers (BAC .08-.09 percent). Hearing, speech, vision, and balance are affected.

Five beers (BAC .10-.11 percent.) Most behaviors are affected: Body parts seem to not work together; performing any task with hands is difficult; walking without stumbling is difficult.

If drinking continues until BAC reaches about .30 percent—about 11 beers—a coma or deep sleep is not unusual. If BAC reaches .50 percent, a deep coma and death can occur. ■

Privately Owned Motor Vehicle Accidents with Alcohol as a Contributing Factor



FY	TOTAL	FATALS	INJURIES	COST
85	376	106	373	\$ 9,162,343
86	274	77	273	\$ 6,408,960
87	197	71	192	\$ 5,985,601
88	181	70	165	\$ 5,458,038
89	142	46	150	\$ 9,766,912*

*Note: Accident costs increased per recent regulatory changes. For example, an enlisted soldier fatality is currently figured at \$125,000, up from the previous \$47,000 cost figure.

LIFTING BASICS

Techniques For Safe Lifting

Safe lifting is always important—but it's *critical* when lifting is a part of your job or everyday activities. If you've ever "thrown out" your back while doing a seemingly simple lift—moving a crate, lifting a piece of furniture, carrying a file box to the office—you know firsthand the importance of safe lifting. Safe lifting means keeping your back aligned while you lift, maintaining your center of balance, and letting the strong muscles in your legs do the actual lifting. By using the following techniques, you can learn how to lift safely and save your back from accidental strain and injury.

The Safe Way To Lift

Before you lift anything, think about the load you'll be lifting. Ask yourself: "Can I lift it alone?" "Do I need mechanical help?" "Is it too awkward for one person to handle, or should I ask a coworker for help?" If the load is manageable, follow these tips for safe lifting:



1. Tuck Your Pelvis

By tightening your stomach muscles you can tuck your pelvis which will help your back stay in balance while you lift.

2. Bend Your Knees

Bend at your knees instead of at your waist. This helps you keep your center of balance and lets the strong muscles in your legs do the lifting.



3. "Hug" The Load

Try to hold the object you're lifting as close to your body as possible, as you gradually straighten your legs to a standing position.

4. Avoid Twisting

Twisting can overload your spine and lead to serious injury. Make sure your feet, knees, and torso are pointed in the same direction when lifting.



Tips To Remember

In addition to these techniques, remember to make sure that your footing is firm when lifting and that your path is clear. And be sure to use the same safe techniques when you set your load down. It takes no more time to do a safe lift than it does to do an unsafe lift, so why not play it safe and lift it right?



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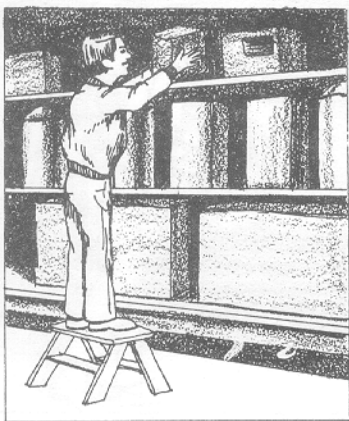
LIFTING AWKWARD LOADS

Safe Lifting In Special Situations

Most people whose jobs require lifting are familiar with the "safe" lift—bending your knees, hugging the load, and letting the strong muscles in your legs do the actual lifting. This standard way of lifting is safe, but in many situations, it's impractical. When the load you have to lift is awkward, or is in a hard-to-reach area, a standard lift can be difficult to perform. The following tips can help you lift safely in situations where the standard lift can't be used.

Odd-sized Loads

Long objects that are relatively light can be awkward to lift and carry. When lifting and carrying pipes, lumber, or other long, light loads don't "hug" the load close to your body. Instead, support it on your shoulder, keeping the front end of the object higher than the rear. If the load is long or heavy enough to require two people, each of you should shoulder it on the same side and keep the object level. (Be sure to keep in step



If you have to lift an object that's above shoulder-level, use a stepstool or ladder to avoid over-reaching.



If a load is hard to reach, stand with feet at shoulder distance apart, slightly bend your knees, and start to squat, bending at your hip joints, not at your waist. (The movement is the same one you make when you lower yourself into a chair.)

while walking.) Some over-sized loads may be light enough to carry, but can block your vision. In those situations, it's best to use mechanical help or ask a coworker for a hand.

Hard-To-Reach Loads

Overhead loads can be difficult to lift. If you have to lift an object that's above shoulder-level, use a

stepstool or ladder to avoid over-reaching. Test the weight of the load before removing it from its shelf. If it's under 25 pounds or so, slide it toward you, and hug it close to your body as you descend. If possible, hand it down to a waiting coworker.

Reaching into a bin, container, or other storage area to lift an object makes the standard lift next to impossible. In these situations, stand with feet at shoulder distance apart, slightly bend your knees, and start to squat, bending at your hip joints, not at your waist. (The movement is the same one you make when you lower yourself into a chair.) Slide the load as close to your body as you can and raise yourself using your leg and hip muscles. Tighten your abdominal muscles as you lift, and if possible, rest your knees against the side of the container for additional support.

Tips To Remember

Whenever possible, use the standard lift. But, if a load is awkward, use the preceding tips to help you lift it safely. Avoid extending your upper body to lift a load—you'll not only lose your center of balance, you'll also risk injuring your back. Finally, use your safety sense—if a load is too awkward or hard-to-reach to lift it safely—get help!



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MATERIAL HANDLING

Move The Load Safely

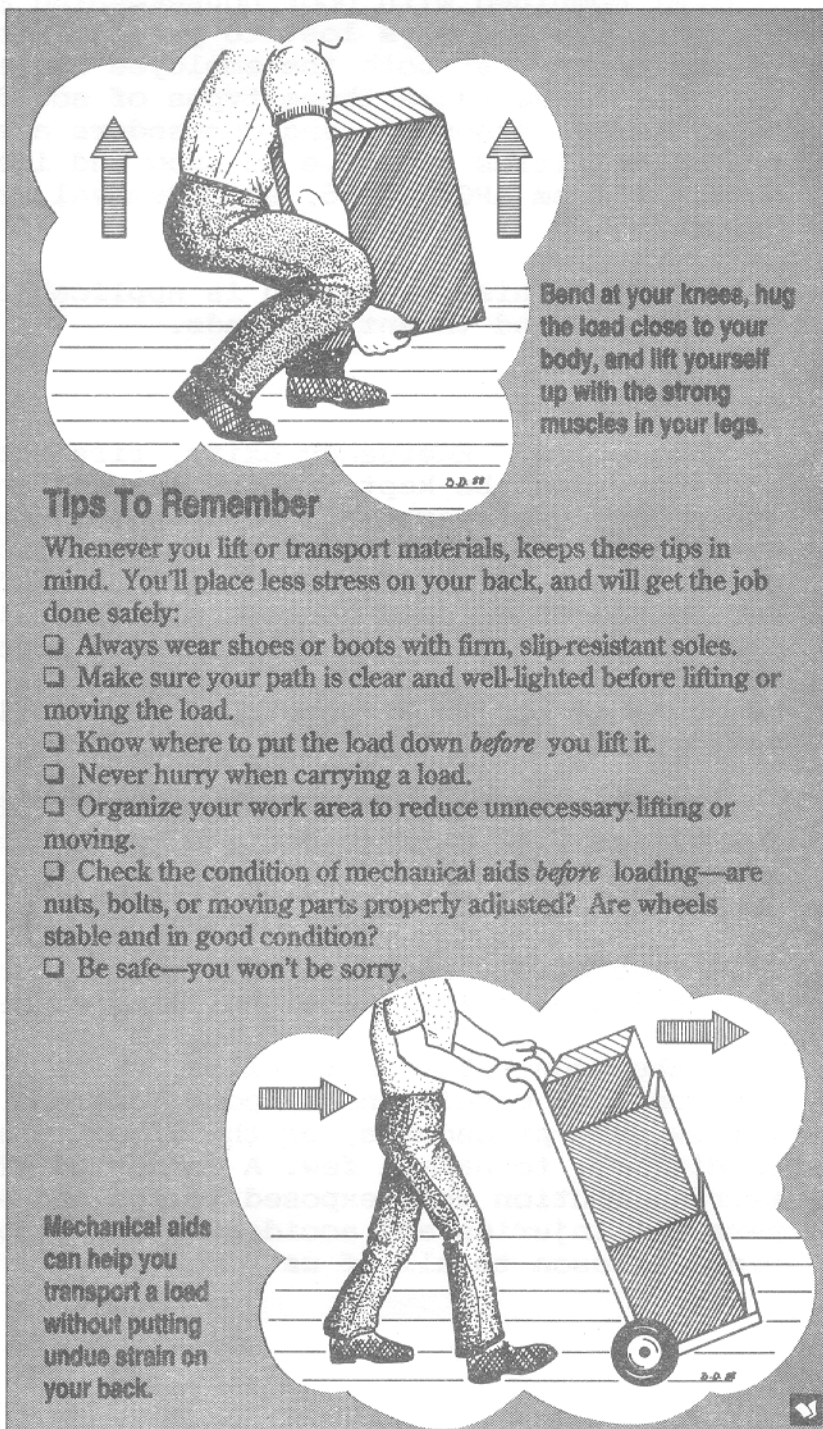
Those of us whose jobs require material handling, may already know about safe lifting techniques. But safe lifting is only one aspect of material handling; transporting the load safely is the other. How you move or carry and put down the load is just as important as how you pick it up. The following tips can help you move the load safely and protect your back from stress, strain, and potential injury.

Safe Lifting

Safe lifting means keeping your back aligned and balanced when lifting. Most standard loads under 25 pounds can be lifted and carried safely by following these steps. You begin by bending from the knees (not the waist), tucking your pelvis and tightening your stomach muscles. You then hug the load close to you, and gradually lift yourself up using the strong muscles in your legs. When carrying the object, be sure not to twist or bend. Then, bend at the knees and slowly slide the load down your body until you can comfortably put the load down.

Mechanical Aids

Not all loads can (or should) be lifted by you or your coworkers. Carts, bins, hand trucks, dollies, and fork lifts are all mechanical aids that can help transport a load without putting undue strain on your back. Pushcarts and bins can be useful for light, awkward loads, while hand trucks and fork-lifts can help move heavier, stackable material. When using mechanical aids, be sure that the load is secured in place before moving, and be sure to push the device rather than pulling it.

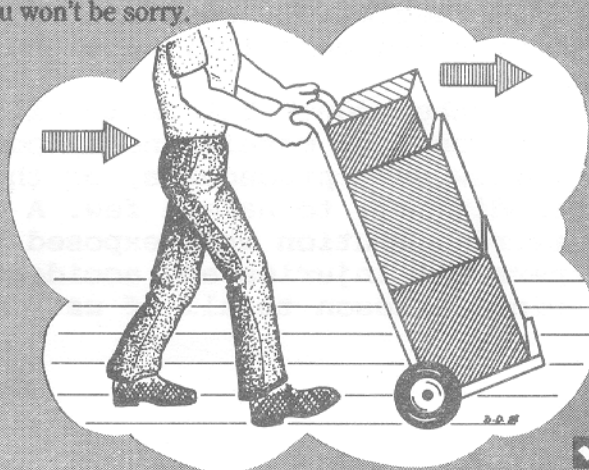


Bend at your knees, hug the load close to your body, and lift yourself up with the strong muscles in your legs.

Tips To Remember

Whenever you lift or transport materials, keep these tips in mind. You'll place less stress on your back, and will get the job done safely:

- ☐ Always wear shoes or boots with firm, slip-resistant soles.
- ☐ Make sure your path is clear and well-lighted before lifting or moving the load.
- ☐ Know where to put the load down *before* you lift it.
- ☐ Never hurry when carrying a load.
- ☐ Organize your work area to reduce unnecessary lifting or moving.
- ☐ Check the condition of mechanical aids *before* loading—are nuts, bolts, or moving parts properly adjusted? Are wheels stable and in good condition?
- ☐ Be safe—you won't be sorry.



Mechanical aids can help you transport a load without putting undue strain on your back.

SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL AT APG

by Susie Ashby

Installation Safety Office

Accidents involving slips, trips, and falls due to inclement weather combined with poor housekeeping are costly. Personal incapability and days lost to personal injuries from these types of accidents cost both the employee and employer, respectively. In order to decrease these types of accidents, all employees, supervisory personnel, and commanders are reminded of their responsibilities relative to snow and ice removal. The following excerpts from APGR 420-5, Snow Removal, are provided for guidance:

SCOPE. This regulation is applicable to all elements of the APG Command and tenant commands.

GENERAL.

Phase III. Emergency exits, fire escape platforms, and stairways must be kept free of ice and snow to provide safe emergency egress from all buildings in event of fire or other emergency. Phase III will be implemented approximately two hours prior to the start of the scheduled workday or as necessary during and after duty hours. All installation activities will utilize available personnel to clear areas in their vicinity as needed, without specific directions from the APG EOC to do so, but this is not to be construed as constituting an automatic authorization for the usage of overtime.

RESPONSIBILITY. Commanders, staff officers, and heads of activities will utilize assigned personnel to clear walks and entrances to assigned buildings which are not otherwise provided for in this regulation.

This regulation should be referred to for further instruction concerning each individual building's needs.

Other contributors to slips, trips, and falls are inattention, carelessness, poor judgment, running, failure to follow safe procedures, or the wrong type of shoes for the conditions, to name a few. A concerted effort by all to exercise extreme caution when exposed to ice and snow should reduce personal injuries and accidents, and provide a more enjoyable winter season to all of us.

Have A Green Christmas



Christmas, that wonderful time of family, friends, food and fun, probably generates more household garbage than any other season of the year. But there are a few things we can do to cut down on the trash we send to our landfill sites. This Christmas, let's be good to one another and to the environment too.

Packaging:

- Try not to buy much new gift-wrapping. Reuse the same gift wrapping for birthdays and the holidays year after year. Ribbons and bows can go on forever too.
- Create your own gift wrapping by decorating secondhand paper. Use recycled decorations and a little imagination to spice up the package.
- Wrap gifts in the color comics from the newspaper or bright magazine pages.
- Don't buy gift boxes; reuse the boxes you already have.
- Make reusable gift boxes, the kind you see on television but nobody seems to use in real life. You untie a ribbon and lift off a lid instead of tearing off the paper.
- Use packaging tape sparingly, to conserve it and to save the wrapping paper for another few rounds.

- Use popcorn instead of foam pellets for cushioning items to be shipped.
- Avoid excess packaging. Say "no" to bubble packs, and the mounds of cardboard, plastic and foam padding which surround some small items.

Think recycling:

- Other than the hottest summer days, the Christmas season probably accounts for most of the soft-drink and liquor bottles collected in the average home. Be sure to save these for recycling. Separate glass jars and bottles by color.
- Find a new home for unneeded gifts. Clothing can go to charity, joke coffee mugs to your next garage sale.
- After unwrapping packages, flatten cardboard containers. Separate the corrugated and flat cardboard for recycling.

Use cards again:

- Save greeting cards to use again. Combine pictures and prose from commercial greeting cards to make your own Christmas and birthday cards.
- Pieces of greeting cards can make interesting name tags.
- Greeting cards can be used to make placecards for special dinners such as Christmas.
- Some organizations such as craft programs accept greeting cards to reuse.

Energy:

- When you buy Christmas lights — and any light bulbs or lighting fixtures — look for energy-saving models.
- Turn on your Christmas lights later in the season, shortly before Christmas, and shut them down sooner.
- Or don't use Christmas lights at all.
- With lots of guests and traffic in and out of the house, you will have to try harder to keep energy consumption down. Encourage people to take short showers, and to run heating appliances such as the dishwasher and clothes dryer late in the evening instead of peak consumption hours. Make sure they keep the doors closed.

This year, put a better environment on your Christmas wish list. Take care to conserve natural resources as you celebrate the holidays.

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KEEP YOUR HOLIDAY SEASON SAFE!

The holiday season is here--a fun and festive time of year, especially when it comes to decorating your home, putting up the tree, wrapping gifts, and attending parties.

But to keep it fun and festive, we should all be aware of the extra hazards that can creep up at this time of year.

HOLIDAY DECORATIONS Colored gift wrap may contain lead and other toxic metals that are dangerous when burned, or

when chewed or swallowed by a small child. It is a good idea to discard wrappings in the trash as soon as gifts are opened.

Avoid placing lighted candles close to wreaths or ribbons or other flammable materials.

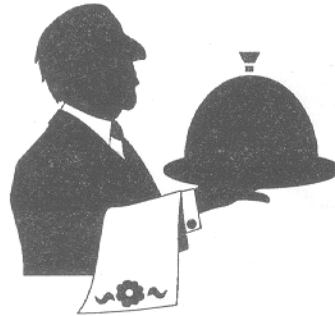
Poinsettia, mistletoe, holly berries, Jerusalem cherries, amaryllis and other holiday plants can look inviting to small children and pets--even inviting enough to eat. But they can cause severe gastrointestinal illness. It is best to keep them out of reach of both toddlers and pets.

YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE. If you purchase a live tree, make sure it is fresh. Pull lightly on the needles. They should be tightly attached to the branch. Also, shake the tree vigorously--if needles fall, choose another.

Check the wiring of tree lights and extension cords for fraying or cracks in insulation; replace strings of lights that are defective, worn or lack the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) seal of safety. Don't overload the string, extension cord or wall outlets. Use extension cords only for the purposes recommended by the manufacturer.

If you have crawling infants or busy toddlers in the house, avoid placing colorful bulbs or tiny ornaments near the bottom of the tree. Perhaps you'd like to try edible Christmas cookies at the child's level.

HOLIDAY PARTIES. If you are hosting a party always serve food first if you will be serving alcoholic beverages. Food, especially high protein items like meat and cheese, helps block alcohol absorption into the bloodstream. Have soft drinks on hand for those who are driving, or would rather not drink an alcoholic beverage. Above all, don't let an intoxicated guest drive. Call a cab, have someone take the person home, or let them stay overnight, but **DON'T LET THEM DRIVE DRUNK!**



by:

Susie Ashby

Installation Safety Division

ACCIDENTS DON'T TAKE HOLIDAYS

Accidents happen all year round, and the holiday season is no exception. Holidays are a time of year when accidents occur more frequently. For example, there are more motor vehicle crashes, falls, home fires, poisonings, and injuries to children.

Most holiday accidents can be avoided. Your "Safety Attitude" can make a difference between happy holidays and tragedy.

The most important "attitude" you can have is to not drink and drive. About half of all fatal car crashes involve people who have been drinking if you plan to drink use the designated driver program.

If you're planning a party, provide a variety of non-alcoholic drinks. Provide plenty of snacks - especially starching foods such as cheese and crackers. Never force drinks on any guest. Close the "bar" early, at least one hour before the end of the party. And never let anyone drive under the influence of alcohol. Ask a nondrinker to drive your guest home, call a cab, or let the guest stay overnight.

If you intend to drink follow these simple rules:

- *Set a limit on how much you drink and stick to it.
- *Sip your drink to give your body more time to process the alcohol.
- *Know what you're drinking and how much alcohol is in each drink.
- *Keep track of how many drinks you've had.
- *Alternate alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages.
- *Eat before drinking and as you drink.
- *Stop well in advance of driving.
- *Don't Drive until you are sober. Only time will sober you up.
- *If you're driving watch out for drinking drivers - there are some tell-tale signs.
- *Be alert for erratic driving - weaving, driving too fast or too slow, etc.
- *Keep well away from any suspicious driver so that you stay out of danger.

*Report the vehicle to the police. Provide the license number and a description of the vehicle.

Pay extra attention to your car and safety during the holidays. This time of the year can be stressful and busy.

1. Be sure your car is safe. Check your car's: battery, fluid levels, exhaust system, wipers and defroster, brakes, lights, and tires

2. Allow extra travel time plan for:

- *Heavier traffic

- *Poorer visibility

- *Changing road conditions due to ice and snow

3. Carry emergency supplies. These include:

- *Shovel

- *Booster cables

- *Flashlight

- *Low chain

- *First-aid kit

- *Matches

- *Flares

- *Blanket

- *Scraper

- *Sand

4. Always wear your safety belt. You're twice as likely to survive a crash if you're wearing your safety belt. Insist that all passengers wear theirs, too. Use approved safety seats for toddlers and infants.

5. Drive Defensively. Reduce your speed and adjust to changing road conditions. Give yourself more time to slow down, brake, and turn safely.

6. Know how to handle skid. If you start to skid:

- *Use the "off-and-off" rule - keep foot off the brake and off the gas.

*Gently turn in the direction you want your vehicle to go.

7. Pull safely off the road. If you have to make an emergency stop:

*Turn on flashers and light flares.

*Signal for help. Raise the hood and tie a colored cloth to the antenna.

*Stay with your vehicle - don't wander around.

Don't let a fire ruin the holidays.

1. Check for Electrical Hazards.

*Overload outlets.

*Replace frayed, cracked, or worn cords.

*Place cords under rugs, furniture, etc.

*Replace blown fuses with ones of the correct size.

*Cover unused outlets with safety caps.

*Unplug heating appliance (toasters, irons, etc.) immediately after use.

2. Be Aware of Fire Hazards.

*Rubbish - don't let it pile up. Dispose of it on a weekly basis.

*Portable Heaters - use them properly, away from combustibles and flammables. Ventilate heaters as recommended by the manufacturer.

*Woodstoves and Chimneys - clean and inspect them regularly.

*Fireplaces - use a screen or glass door to prevent sparks from flying out.

3. Make a Fire Escape Plan.

*Mark all exits on a piece of paper.

*Plan two escape routes from each room.

*Select a meeting area outside (near a tree, streetlight, etc.).

*Post the plan where it can be easily seen.

4. Hold Regular Fire Drills.

*It's the best way to make sure that everyone knows what to do in case of fire.

Decorations add to your holiday enjoyment, but they also add to your homes fire risk. Be extra careful with:

Christmas Trees. If you buy an evergreen tree:

*Choose one that's fresh, or cut one yourself. (Needles and branches shouldn't be brittle).

*Re-cut the base of a pre-cut tree.

*Use a sturdy stand that can be filled with water.

*Water daily.

If you buy an artificial tree:

*Choose one that carries the seal of a testing laboratory sure it's flame resistant.

*Never put lights on a metallic tree - use a spotlight instead.

For both types of trees:

*Place the tree away from sources of heat.

*Don't block escape paths

Lights:

* Use only lights that have a testing laboratory seal.

*Inspect light sets for bare spots, breaks, frayed wires, etc.

*Discard any damaged sets.

*Use only outdoor-approved lights for outdoor decorating.

*Unplug all lights when you leave or go to bed.

Trimnings:

*Use only noncombustible or flame-resistant decorations.

*Avoid using decorations that are breakable.

Candles:

*Never use them near evergreen trees, or any combustibles (curtains, wrapping paper, etc.).

*Place candles where they won't be knocked over.

*Keep children away from candles.

*Never leave burning candles unattended.

General Rules for Decorations Safety:

*Avoid smoking near decorations and trees.

*Don't burn evergreens or wrapping paper in wood stoves or fireplaces.

Here are a few more safe tips for the holidays, walk safely outdoors:

*Wear proper footwear.

*Stay on the sidewalks.

*Make yourself visible at night by wearing reflective clothing.

*Don't overburden yourself with packages.

Prevent Falls:

*Clear outside walkways and stairs of ice and snow.
Spread sand on slippery surfaces.

*Keep inside walkways free of clutter.

*Use a stepladder or footstool for climbing, not a chair.

*Make sure cords aren't tripping hazards.

Dress for the Weather, Wear:

*Layers of clothing to keep warm.

*Mittens and a hat.

*A water-repellent outer garment in rain or snow.

Avoid Overexertion:

*Get plenty of rest.

*Take frequent breaks while working outside.

***Consult your physician before taking up an outdoor winter activity.**

MARYLAND



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CHESTNUTS ROASTING ON AN OPEN FIRE..... A BURNING SAFETY ISSUE

The holidays bring to mind images of family gatherings around the fireplace, cozy candle light, and other warm scenes. Please do not let lack of safety precautions turn these scenes into a tragedy.

Fires and burns kill hundreds of children each year. Burns are the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children in the United States. Each year burns kill more than 1,300 children and disable and permanently scar thousands more. Children, because they have thinner skin, sustain more severe burns at lower temperatures than adults.

Children age four and under are twice as likely to die in a fire than the rest of the population. For this age group, playing with matches and lighters is the leading cause of fire death and injury. However, there are many other hazards in households which may lead to a fire or a severe burn. To help reduce these risks the Maryland State Fire Marshal's Office, the Maryland SAFE KIDS Coalition and the National SAFE KIDS Campaign offer the following safety precautions to protect your child.

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD FROM FIRE

Young children are frightened by fire. They may hide in closets or under beds. Teach your children exactly what to do when they hear the smoke alarm or see smoke.

- **Buy and install smoke detectors.** Ninety percent of child fire deaths occur in homes without working smoke detectors. Install smoke detectors on every floor of your home or apartment.
- **Test and maintain your smoke detectors regularly.** Test them at least once a month. Replace the batteries once a year.
- **Practice two escape routes from your home.** Know two ways out of your home and practice them with your children.
- **Designate an outside meeting place and wait there for all family members.**

- **Crawl, don't run.** Smoke and heat rise. The closer to the floor, the easier it will be to breathe.
- **Never re-enter a burning building.**

FIRESIDE HOLIDAY TIPS

- **Practice fireplace safety.** Have your fireplace professionally cleaned at least once a year. Do not burn papers in a fireplace. Keep wrapping paper away from the fireplace. Always use a screen in front of the fireplace while the fire is burning. Before closing the flue, make sure the fire is out completely. **Keep children away from the fireplace!**
- **Take care with candles.** Do not put candles on the tree or window sill. Make sure that small children cannot get to them.
- **Check out lights.** Use only lights that have a firesafety label from a testing laboratory. Replace any worn sets or those with loose connections. Do not overload outlets. Never put lights on metal trees. Always unplug everything before you go to bed or leave the house.
- **Entertain safely.** Make sure all costumes and decorations are flame-retardant and non-combustible. Check for cigarette butts, especially in upholstered furniture. Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of small children.
- **Be careful around heaters.** Keep space heaters at least three feet away from curtains and furniture. Keep children away from heaters! Kerosene heaters must be used with extreme caution and only with kerosene fuel. Kerosene heaters are not legal in Baltimore City, Cumberland, or in any apartments, condominiums, hotels, and motels throughout Maryland.
- **Be careful with greens.** If purchasing a cut tree, make sure it is fresh. Keep the tree watered and away from sources of heat. Keep all decorative greens away from heat sources.

Remember in this season of celebrations, decorations, and friendly gatherings to always keep safety and common sense in mind - to ensure a happy holiday for you and your loved ones.

For more information contact the Maryland Safe Kids Coalition, which is part of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, a long-term effort to prevent injury - the number one killer of children. More than 80 national organizations and 160 state and local coalitions in 46 states and the District of Columbia are taking part in the Campaign.

For more information, call Deputy Chief State Fire Marshal Bob Thomas at 410-764-4324 or 1-800-525-3124. For general MD SAFE KIDS Coalition information call Barbara Beckett, MD SAFE KIDS Coalition Coordinator, 410-787-5893.

MARYLAND



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HAVE A HAPPY "SAFE" HOLIDAY

During the December holiday season, some scurry to decorate the Christmas tree and buy the perfect presents. Some light Hanukkah candles. While others create a Kwanzaa feast. With all the activity, few pause to think about holiday safety. But, in an instant, an injury can take the merry out of Christmas, the happy out of Hanukkah, and the joy out of Kwanzaa.

The holidays are such a busy time of the year that few parents pause to consider children's safety when decorating the home. Unfortunately, holiday trappings such as trees, candles, and giftwrap can be dangerous, but keeping safety in mind from the beginning is the best remedy.

The Maryland SAFE KIDS Coalition and the National SAFE KIDS Campaign suggest the following tips to keep your holiday season healthy and happy:

CHRISTMAS TREES

- **Look for a fresh Christmas tree if you choose to buy a natural tree.** Fresh trees are less likely to catch fire than older trees. Pick a tree with a strong scent of pine, branches that easily bend without snapping or breaking, and needles that are green and securely adhered to branches. Try bouncing the tree on firm ground to see if many needles fall off.
- **Keep your tree in a full container of water, check it daily.**
- **Keep the tree away from heat sources such as fireplaces, radiators or heating vents.**
- **Decorate your tree with children in mind.** Do not put breakable ornaments, ornaments with small, detachable parts, or ornaments that look like food or candy on the lower branches where small children can reach them.
- **Dispose of your tree quickly after the holidays.**
- **Never burn Christmas tree branches, treated wood, or wrapping paper in your fireplace.**

- **Consider buying a fire-resistant artificial tree.**
- **Beware of trees treated to look like they are covered with artificial snow.**
Children think the poisonous flock is powdered sugar.

LIGHTS AND CANDLES

- **Decorate your tree using only UL-approved lights and cords.** Inspect the lights for exposed or frayed wires, loose connections, or broken sockets. Do not overload extension cords with lights. Use no more than three strings of lights on one extension cord, and never run an electrical cord under a carpet. Be sure to secure electrical cords so children cannot pull them over. Keep toddlers away from electrical fixtures, and unplug and cover electrical sockets when they are not in use.
- **Turn off the tree lights when you go to bed or leave the house.**
- **Keep burning candles, matches and lighters out of children's reach.**
- **Do not place candles near draperies or anything that might easily catch fire.**
- **Teach children not to touch burning candles but, instead, to admire their beauty from a safe distance.**
- **After building a fire in the fireplace, always use a screen and never leave young children unattended in the room.**

POISONS

Christmas introduces unique chemicals and poisons into the home -- many of them come in innocent and unexpected forms:

- **Keep poisonous plants out of reach.** Some poisonous holiday plants include: Amaryllis, Azalea, Boxwood, Castor Bean, Christmas Cactus, Christmas Rose, Crown of Thorns, English and American Ivy, Jerusalem or Jimson Weed, Christmas Cherry, Mountain Laurel, and Pokeweed. Watch for the Holly and Mistletoe Berries that fall on the ground because they are poisonous, too. Contrary to popular belief, Poinsettias are not poisonous, but they may cause skin irritation and intense gastrointestinal distress.
- **Keep common baking ingredients such as vanilla and almond extract out of reach.** They contain high levels of alcohol and maybe harmful to young children if swallowed.
- **Dispose of colored wrapping paper immediately.** It may contain lead and other materials toxic to small children if chewed. Teach children that decorations are not food.

For more information, call Deputy Chief State Fire Marshal Bob Thomas at 410-764-4324 or 1-800-525-3124. For general MD SAFE KIDS Coalition information call Barbara Beckett, MD SAFE KIDS Coalition Coordinator, 410-787-5893.